



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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DRIVERS URGED TO WATCH FOR DEER ON IOWA ROADS

DES MOINES – Although the number of deer – vehicle collisions declined last year, drivers should be aware that the period from late May to the middle of June is the second worst time of the year for deer collisions behind only the November rut. Collisions are more likely to occur at dawn or dusk when deer are normally more active.

During late spring, the does will be driving off yearlings as they prepare to have fawns. These young deer are inexperienced and often wander on to roadways as they seek out a new territory. Deer that had been following their mother's lead now are on their own and their behavior can be unpredictable as they gain experience with their new surroundings.

Watch carefully for deer, said Willie Suchy, state deer biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “If you see one deer, look for more.”

Efforts to like horn honking and blinking lights are not effective for driving deer from the road, Suchy said. “Expect erratic behavior. These young deer may return to the road after they have safely crossed. Slow down and drive with care.”

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[electronic photo available]

IOWA MUSHROOM ENTHUSIASTS HARVEST BUMPER MOREL CROP --- AT LEAST ONE GOOD WEEK OF HUNTING REMAINS

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

GARNAVILLO---Located along the main drag of downtown Garnavillo [pop. 752], Thoma's Dairy Bar is one of northeast Iowa's best known spots for obtaining an honest-to-goodness, home cooked meal. Equally important, is the fact that Thoma's is also a premier location for gathering reliable intelligence regarding pertinent happenings in the Clayton county outdoors. I'm talking about the really important stuff. Like what patterns the trout are hitting, where the turkeys are gobbling, and which locals are finding the most mushrooms.

Extracting good information on the annual mushroom crop is, of course, is the toughest nut to crack. And although mushroom hunters are generally more tight lipped than a draft horse with lockjaw, things are different this year. The reason for this refreshing change is obvious. After a much-needed series of spring rainfalls, the Iowa woodlands are bursting with morels. With most people currently finding more than they can eat, there is no longer a need for the usual extreme secrecy.

"I'd have to say that this year is better than average, and I think it's better than last spring," said Garnavillo resident and mushroom hunting enthusiast, Paul Puelz.

"Yesterday, I picked 15 pounds of morels -- all from around just two trees. A lot of the people I've talked to have already found more than they want and are giving the rest away," said Puelz.

Further downstream on the Mississippi River, Davenport fireman Tom Deckert is reporting similar success.

"It's just been an excellent year around here," said Deckert. "It's turned into a wet spring and that's helped. There are also quite a few dead elms around again and that helps also. Anymore, I just look for the dead elms. For me, it really cuts down on the time it takes to find what you're after."

"Yesterday, I picked ten pounds of mushrooms that were still nice and fresh. I'd guess we have at least another good week down here, and longer yet farther north," said Deckert.

"A buddy and I also hunted up around Dubuque and we found a lot of morels there. I guess everybody was getting them, and I saw one guy that literally had a trunk full. His car trunk was so loaded with garbage bags of mushrooms that he could barely close the lid. It was the kind of find I always hope to make but never have," laughed

Deckert.

The latest mushroom report offered by Muscatine County's Robert Kirkman was just as glowing.

"This spring has really been something," said Kirkman. "Everybody is talking about how good the mushroom hunting is this year. Morels are everywhere. Just about everyone is finding all they want to eat and are giving sack fulls to friends. One of my friends at work told me that the number of mushrooms he's already given away this spring is more than the combined total of what he's picked during the last two years. It's that good."

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JUNE 30 – LAST DAY FOR CRP CONTRACT RENEWAL

DES MOINES – Landowners with existing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts that expire in 2008, 2009 or 2010 have until June 30 to continue their contracts.

The local USDA Farm Service Agency notified landowners of renewal and extension offers in April. In response, landowners must sign up at their local FSA office by June 30, 2006, if they want to accept the offers.

"It's tough to make a decision now about a 10- or 15-year contract that doesn't start for two to four years," said Lyle Asell, special assistant for agriculture at the DNR. "But, this is an offer that many landowners will want to take advantage of."

"For landowners, the contract offers guaranteed income on marginal land where yields are typically less than on land more suitable for cropping," Asell said. "CRP is often the best choice for marginal cropland – for the landowner, for wildlife and for water quality."

Producers will need to weigh the costs of converting the CRP land to cropland and ensuring that it can be farmed according to a conservation plan against the benefits of having it in a CRP contract. On steep hills or erosive soils, the restrictions of the conservation plan, such as adding terraces or farming with a cover crop, may mean that CRP is more attractive.

At stake in Iowa are more than 800,000 cropland acres that are currently planted to permanent covers of grass, grass-forb combinations or trees.

"For the public, these lands protect our water quality, by reducing the amounts of sediment, nutrients and pesticides that reach our streams and lakes," Asell said.

Landowners who received the letter were given one of two choices:

- Re-enrollment for those with the most vulnerable soils that yield the greatest environmental benefits if they remain in CRP. Those contracts will be offered for 10 to 15 years, under a revised rental rate often higher than previous rates. Landowners will have to maintain the cover with disking or burning in the middle of the new contract.
- Extensions for land that is less erosive or has a less beneficial cover type. Extensions are offered for two to five years at the existing rental rate.

DNR biologists and foresters can help landowners with these decisions. Call the DNR Phone Center at (515) 281-5918 to find the biologist or forester that serves your county. Or, stop by your local FSA, NRCS or Soil and Water Conservation District office for more information.

For more information, contact Bill Ehm at the DNR, (515) 281-4701; or Mike Musel at the Farm Service Agency State Office, (515) 254-1540 Ext. 440.

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[electronic photo available]

Who's Got Who?

CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH WILD TURKEY SENDS NORTH IOWA HUNTER TO HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

McGregor---For retired conservation officer and veteran turkey slayer Steve Schutte, this year's spring hunting season ended with a bang, a slash, and an unexpected trip to the hospital emergency room.

The fateful hunt took place in extreme northeastern Iowa where Schutte and I have hunted turkeys for more than 25 years. We've both enjoyed our share of success and failure here, with each new hunt accompanied by its own set of unique challenges. The only guarantee is that with each passing season the local gobblers will invent new ways to test our skills and try our patience.

This spring it was Schutte's turn to endure humility and frustration --- all due to the mischievous antics of three Long Beards currently residing atop the wooded spine of Poison Point.

From its trout stream base to hardwood summit, Poison Point towers more than 350 feet above the valley floor. Even in a region encompassed by forestlands, wild turkeys consider this ridge to be paradise. Only the meanest, baddest, toughest toms are allowed to gobble and strut here. It is Schutte's favorite place to hunt.

By the time the fourth and final segment of this year's season rolled around, the Poison Point gobblers had Schutte in a knot. And no matter how hard he tried, Steve just couldn't bring one of those woodland monarchs to bag. Whenever we'd break for breakfast, I'd hear the latest account.

"I wish you'd been there this morning. It was just unbelievable," the story would begin.

"I'd call and those turkeys would just go ballistic. They'd gobble, double gobble, triple gobble. Every time I'd call they'd just go nuts. But I can never get them to come those last few yards," Schutte would lament.

"I've tried everything. More calling. Less calling. Sometimes I just quit calling. By the time I gave up this morning, I had every call I own laid out on the ground in front of me. I actually saw one of those gobblers twice. He was curious but wouldn't come in. All three of those birds were still gobbling when I left the woods," said Schutte.

It was a clear windless morning when the tables finally turned. Hens were scarce and turkeys were gobbling in every direction. It was just past sunrise when, two ridges distant, I heard the sound of Schutte's shotgun. Ten minutes later, I felt the vibration of my pocket phone.

"Well Lowell, I'm finally hauling one of those gobblers off Poison Point," reported Schutte.

Welcome news to be sure, but Steve's voice sounded strained. I sensed there was more to the story.

"I think I might have a little bit of a problem," he continued. "Somehow this turkey managed to get a spur into my hand and it's cut pretty deep."

"I'll be right there," I replied.

As it turned out, the cut was also a puncture and it was indeed deep. Equally alarming were the visible nodules of tissue -- for lack of a better term we'll call them meat -- protruding from the wound. In spite of the pain, Schutte had to tell his story.

"I wish you'd have been there," he began. "Those three toms were on that ridge at daylight and they were cranked."

Going through the usual repertoire, Schutte finally struck a call that literally drove those toms over the edge. Unable to resist the temptation, two of the gobblers made a swift beeline toward what they thought was a very vocal hen turkey. The duo soon arrived at Schutte's location, but halted behind a patch of gooseberry that prevented a clear shot.

As Schutte continued calling, the gobblers became competitive and a full blown gobbler smack-down soon erupted. The noise was incredible as the giant, 25-pound birds pummeled each other with beak, wing, and spur. With deadly intent, the turkeys spared like gamecocks in a vicious dance designed to cut, demoralize, or disable the opponent.

After minutes of fighting, the pair called a truce and resumed their search for the mystery hen. Finally, at a mere 14 paces, one of the birds offered Schutte a clear view. The turkey never heard the shot that killed it.

As turkey hunters always do, Schutte rushed to subdue his prize. Although it really wasn't necessary, you just never know. More than one 'dead turkey' has recovered to fly away.

It was at this point that the hunt began to go south. As Schutte pinned the thrashing bird to the ground, one of the turkey's long needle-sharp spurs became tangled in his right hand glove. The bird gave a violent twist, instantly cinching the glove's cuff to Schutte's wrist. As the bird continued to spasm, the inch-plus spur drove deeper into the palm. As Schutte frantically attempted to free the glove, the gobbler's wing thumped the first knuckle of his other hand rendering it temporarily useless as well. Totally shredded from thumb heel to fingertip, the now blood soaked glove finally tore loose.

Schutte's left hand was now purple, black, and swollen. His right hand, well -- you've already heard about that. Within an hour of leaving the timber, Schutte was undergoing treatment at the hospital emergency room in Prairie Du Chien, Wis. With no permanent damage to nerves or tendons, Steve will live to gobble another day.

Over the years, I've heard many stories about hunters receiving serious hand, tendon, and wrist injuries while handling shot turkeys. This was the first I've personally witnessed, and I hope it's the last.

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RIVER CLEANUP GRANTS ANNOUNCED, MORE TO COME

DES MOINES — Volunteers in five Iowa communities will clean up lakes or rivers this summer with help from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). On May 15, the department announced the first recipients of a new grant program for watershed cleanups.

Organizations from Carter Lake, Des Moines, Dixon, Elkader and Oskaloosa received CLEAR (Community Leaders Enhancing Area River) mini-grants worth up to \$1,000. The money will help fund community cleanup events where volunteers will haul litter from local bodies of water.

The first-round winners applied for their mini-grants this spring. Other groups and individuals interested in conducting their own cleanups are encouraged to apply for the second round of grants, due July 21. Visit www.iowater.net for details.

The events on the following dates:

- Carter Lake Preservation Society, Carter Lake: Carter Lake Cleanup, April 14, 2007.
- Clayton County Conservation Board, Elkader: Tidying the Turkey, Aug. 19.
- Friends of the Wapsi Center, Inc., Dixon: Grove to Grove Lower Wapsipinicon River Cleanup Project, Aug. 25.
- Iowa Whitewater Coalition, Inc., Des Moines: Clean Rivers Team, May – November.
- Mahaska County Ikes, Oskaloosa: South Skunk River Cleanup, May 20 – June 6.

Visit the volunteer events calendar at www.keepersoftheland.org for further event details.

The CLEAR mini-grant project began as an outgrowth of the DNR's annual river cleanup event Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition). Tremendous interest in local cleanups among Project AWARE volunteers inspired the CLEAR program.

Funded through the DNR's REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) program, the CLEAR grants are administered by the DNR's IOWATER citizen water quality monitoring program.

For more information, contact Brandon Harland at (515) 281-3150 or at brandon.harland@dnr.state.ia.us.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of May 16, 2006

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Southwest

Don Williams (Boone): Fishing is good to excellent for crappies using jigs and minnows in 5 to 15 feet of water over structure. Bluegill fishing has been good using night crawlers. Walleye fishing has been good for 14 to 16-inch fish. Channel catfish are

being caught on chicken liver. Largemouth bass fishing has been good with fish over 15 inches.

Hickory Grove (Story): Crappie fishing has been good using worms and bobbers in deeper water. Bluegill fishing has been fair with worms. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair to good, particularly around the rockier areas.

Big Creek (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good using jigs and minnows with better areas being offshore in deeper water. Anglers reported catching smaller walleye with jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing is slow to fair with some nice-sized fish being caught.

Easter Lake (Polk): Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch crappies using jigs and minnows suspended in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegill fishing is good using night crawlers and bobbers. Several walleye have been caught with some over 15 inches. Largemouth bass fishing is fair along the rocky areas. Channel catfish fishing has been good with night crawlers.

Saylorville Lake (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good particularly in the Marina area and below the spillway from Big Creek Lake into Saylorville. The shallow water coves have also produced some nice crappie fishing. White bass/wipers are being caught below the Big Creek spillway.

Below Saylorville Dam (Polk): White bass/wiper fishing has been good using jigs and/or minnows. Further downstream, anglers are catching some nice walleye. Crappie fishing has been good in the tailwater ponds with jigs and minnows.

Below Scott Street Dam (Polk): Anglers are catching 8 to 12-inch white bass on twisters.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Crappies are good to excellent on jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good fishing from 3 to 5 feet deep from shore and from boats using night crawlers. Channel catfish from 10 to 15 pounds are being caught on cut bait and chicken liver.

Red Rock (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good in Whitebreast using jigs.

Below Lake Red Rock (Marion): White bass and crappie fishing has been excellent using jigs in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using cut baits and liver.

Roberts Creek (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good to excellent using jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been slow.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Crappie fishing is fair with most anglers using jigs and minnows. Bluegill and redear sunfish fishing has been good, with some good-sized fish harvested. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, although most of the fish are below the legal length limit.

Hooper Lake (Warren): Crappie fishing has been fair to good with jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good with small jigs and night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is best along the rocky dam area with crankbaits.

Contact: Dick McWilliams (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Farm Ponds: Fishing is good for bluegill in 3 to 5 feet of water on night crawlers. Crappie and largemouth bass fishing is good.

Green Valley (Union): Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers, dead minnows and bluegill chunks. Crappies can be caught around cover or near the rocks on jigs and minnows. Some bluegill can be caught using jigs and night crawlers in 6 to 8 feet of water near cover. Bullheads are biting on night crawlers.

Three Mile (Union): Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers and cut baits. Bluegill and crappie can be caught in 6 to 10 feet of water over cover with jigs, night crawlers or minnows. Some walleye are being caught on leeches and night crawlers.

Icaria (Adams): Channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds can be caught with night crawlers.

Binder Reservoir (Adams): Channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds can be caught on cut bait or night crawlers.

Little River (Decatur): Several nice crappies can be caught from shore in the rocks or near cover on minnows or jigs. Some walleye are being caught by trolling the points with night crawlers or with jigs while crappie fishing. Largemouth bass fishing is good.

Slip Bluff (Decatur): Some bluegills can be caught from the brush piles and the corners of the dam on night crawlers. Crappies are in the brush piles and near shore in the mornings and evenings.

Wilson Lake (Taylor): Crappies can be caught from the dam. Nice sized bluegills are biting near shore on night crawlers.

Windmill Lake (Taylor): Bluegills are biting in the corners of the dam and the coves on night crawlers.

West Osceola (Clarke): Large numbers of 8-inch crappie can be caught from the dam area and the backs of the coves in 6 feet of water. The lake is 40 inches low. Use caution when using the east main ramp.

Badger Creek (Madison): Anglers are catching 7 to 9-inch crappie from shore near rock using jigs.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Nice bluegill can be caught near shore on night crawlers. Some crappie can be caught near the standing timber.

Loch Ayr (Ringgold): Crappie fishing is good using jigs from the dam.

West Lenox (Taylor): Crappies can be caught from shore in 5 to 8 feet of water using small jigs or night crawlers

Three Fires (Taylor): Several 12 to 14-inch largemouth bass have been caught around the structure and from the rocks of the dam.

Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Orient (Adair): Fishing is good for 2 to 3 pound channel catfish and 1 to 2 pound bullheads on night crawlers. Crappies are fair along the shoreline using minnows with a bobber.

Greenfield (Adair): Crappie fishing has slowed with cooler weather. A few bluegills can be caught using jigs tipped with night crawlers.

Nodaway (Adair): Crappie fishing is fair using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers in shallow areas. Greenfield and Nodaway have low water levels. Shore anglers best fishing would be off the dam.

Meadow (Adair): A few crappies are being caught along shoreline using minnows. Largemouth bass are being caught around brush piles. Bluegills are also being picked up using night crawlers and bobber.

Littlefield (Audubon): Crappie fishing is slow using minnows on the east bay under the road. A few channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers.

Anita (Cass): The lake is still 5 feet low and has limited shoreline access. The boat ramp by the beach can be used with a small (14 foot) boat. The lake contains a good fish population and fishing should be good. Fishing for 12 to 15-inch largemouth bass has been good.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Wiper fishing is fair using night crawlers on the bottom. Walleye fishing has slowed. Crappie fishing is slow in the lagoon area using minnows. Largemouth bass are being picked up on the west side of lake. A few channel catfish are being caught using dead minnows.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): The cool weather has slowed crappie and walleye fishing over the last few days, but once the weather warms, fishing should pick up again. An occasional channel catfish has been taken.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Crappies are starting to move in to shore. A few are being caught using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish fishing is slow but a few are being caught in shallow bays. Largemouth bass, from 3 to 5 pounds, are being caught off the rocky points using a slow retrieve.

Willow (Harrison): Crappie fishing is fair using minnow and bobber in 8 to 10 feet of water. A few 7 to 8-inch bluegills are being caught.

Contact: **Chris Larson (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: The water temperature at Lock and Dam 16 (Muscatine) is 54 degrees and the river pool stage for Pool 16 is 9.97 feet. Water levels are expected to rise slightly over the next several days.

Fishing has slowed. The recent cold, rainy weather has kept most anglers off the Mississippi River. In upper **Pool 16**, anglers still report catching a few walleye (mostly sublegal fish) and sauger below the Arsenal Dam and Sylvan Slough area and where the Rock River joins the Mississippi. Try using jigs tipped with minnows and crankbaits for walleye and sauger. Anglers report fishing for channel catfish continues to be fair in the backwaters and the mouths of tributary rivers and streams on shad guts, cut shad, night crawlers and shrimp. Catfishing has been best in the tributary rivers such as the Iowa and Rock River. White bass fishing continues to be fair on jigs, spinners and minnows in the tailwaters and the mouth of tributary streams and rivers. Crappie and bluegill fishing has been fair in the backwaters. Try Sunset Marina and Andalusia in **Pool 16**, the Big Timber area and Huron Island in **Pool 17** and Lake Odessa in **Pools 17/18**. These backwaters are also producing a few channel catfish.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): On warm days, the crappie fishing has been fairly good. The cold weather shuts the bite off.

Lake Darling (Washington): The continuing cold weather has been keeping the crappies on the move from shallow water to deep, and back again. Try for the bigger

crappies in the deepwater habitat around the trees. Look for the bass and bluegills to move into the shallows, if it warms up this week.

Lake Geode (Henry): The bluegills moved back into deep water due to the cold weather...look for them along the ledges on the east side.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): The bluegills continue to bite, but have moved into the 10 to 12 feet of water. Use a small jig tipped with a wax worm or piece of night crawler to catch them. Redears are also being caught at that depth.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies are suspended in 8 to 10 feet of water. Some walleyes are being caught on night crawlers trolled along rocky points. Channel catfish have been biting on cut bait and night crawlers.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Crappies and bluegills are biting on small jigs. Largemouth bass are hitting on artificial lures. Some walleyes are being caught on minnow and jig combos, with evening being the most productive time of day.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Crappies moved to 10 feet of water with the cooler weather. Bluegills are still near the shoreline. A few largemouth bass have started hitting artificial lures.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Crappies have moved out to about 10 feet of water. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Crappies are expected to move shallow to spawn with the warmer forecast. Try mid depths until water temps come up and then try shallow depths with jigs or minnows.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Bluegills and redears had moved to the shallows before the cold weather. When warm weather returns, expect these fish to be shallow and biting again.

Hannen Lake (Benton): By the end of the week, crappies and bluegills should be shallow and more willing to bite. Try fishing small jigs or wax worms around the brush.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Crappie fishing slowed a little due to the cool off but fishing is expected to pick back up with the warmer days ahead. Try fishing around the brush piles with jigs, minnows or wax worms.

Otter Creek (Tama): Anglers looking for action and tasty fish should come to Otter Creek for yellow bass. The size is marginal (6 to 8 inches) with an occasional larger fish, but numbers will add up for plenty of meat for a couple of meals.

Iowa River (Louisa): The river has been dropping slowly last week (about two feet). Anglers have still been catching a few channel catfish as well as a few flatheads.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: River stage on Monday was 10.4 feet at Guttenberg and 10.6 feet at Bellevue and rising. The gates are out at Guttenberg (**Lock and Dam 10**) and the river should crest on Friday. Water temperature dropped last week to 51 degrees at Guttenberg and 54 degrees at Bellevue. Due to the increase in water levels and drop in water temperatures, fishing pressure and success both slowed last weekend, but should pick up as the temperature rises this week. Many anglers are catching nice-sized bluegill in the tail waters of **Pools 9 to 15**. These fish are being caught in the slack water areas of the tailwaters along the rocks. Some bluegills are also

being caught in the backwater areas in **Pools 9 to 11**. **Sny Magill Complex (Pool 10)** has been good for anglers floating worms under a bobber along the shoreline. The pocket below **Lock and Dam 12** has been very good for bluegill and largemouth bass. Simple rigs—a sinker and small hook baited with a worm—are best for bluegills. Try fishing off the bottom or use a bobber. Small jigs can also be effective for bluegills. Smallmouth bass are being caught on crankbaits, in-line spinners and soft plastics in **Pools 9 to 12** in areas with some current along rocky shorelines. Some crappies are being taken in **Minnesota Slough (Pool 9)**, **Cassville Slough (Pool 11)**, and other sloughs in **Pools 9 to 11**. Look for crappies in areas with under-water snags or along shorelines with woody structure and some depth. Try using a small jig or float a minnow under a slip bobber for crappies. Freshwater drum fishing is excellent in **Pools 12 to 15**. When fishing for drum, use a night crawler along the bottom above the wing dams. Carp are spawning in the backwater areas and can be caught on worms or prepared baits in **Pools 9 to 11**. Channel catfish are hitting night crawlers and cut baits fished in **Pools 12 to 15**. A few flathead catfish are being caught in the **Pool 9 to 11** tailwaters using a large jig tipped with a chub. White bass and a few smallmouth bass are being caught with spinners fished along rocky shorelines and wing dams in **Pools 9 to 11**. Walleye are starting to bite on three-way rigs tipped with a piece of night crawler fished above the wing dams in **Pools 9 to 15**.

Cedar (Bremer and Black Hawk) and Turkey rivers (Clayton): Water levels are receding and the clarity has improved on the interior rivers. Fishing has been slowed with the cool weather, but some walleyes and smallmouth bass can be caught on jigs tipped with night crawlers or minnows. Good-sized channel catfish can be caught on a gob of night crawlers drifted through deeper pools or on cut bait fished on the bottom.

Shell Rock River (Bremer and Butler): The water level is dropping and clarity is improving. Walleyes are hitting jigs with twister tails or crankbaits fished along the rocks.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Walleye fishing has been good fishing a 1/8-ounce jig tipped with a night crawler. There is a good population of walleye from last year's stocking in the 10 to 11-inch group, with larger fish mixed in.

Big Woods Lake (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is fair dragging a 1/32-ounce jig and twister tail or jig and tube tipped with a minnow through 5 to 15 feet of water. Crappies have been ranging from 8 to 9 inches.

Casey Lake (Tama): Bluegills are beginning to move to the shallows and can be caught on jigs tipped with worms under a quarter-sized bobber. Largemouth bass are hitting small crankbaits, spinners and rubber worms. The bass are ranging in size from 11 to 14 inches.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Crappie fishing is improving.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Water temperature late last week was 58 degrees. As the weather improves and temperature rises, crappie fishing will improve.

Meyer Lake (Black Hawk): Drift or slowly troll a jig and minnow combination for crappies. White crappies, from 11 to 13 inches, have been biting.

Silver Lake (Delaware): Bluegill fishing has been good. Fish with a small jig tipped with either a redworm or wax worm under a slip bobber in 4 to 8 feet of water. Channel catfish can also be caught fishing a night crawler off the bottom. Most catfish will range from 15 to 17 inches.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Bluegill fishing has been good using small jigs tipped with earth worms or wax worms fished under a bobber. Crappies are biting on small minnows fished near the dam.

Trout fishing excellent and stream conditions are good to excellent. Stocking information for specific streams can be found on the web by going through the DNR web site at www.iowadnr.com or directly to <http://www.iowadnr.com/fish/news/stockrep/groupstock.pdf>. Anglers may also call the recorded trout stocking information hotline at 563-927-5736.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing was sporadic with weather being a major factor. Drifting with minnows or leeches on Lindy rigs or leadheads were good producers during the day. Casting jigs and minnows under lighted bobbers were good at night. Areas that produced were Buffalo Run, Templar Park and Reeds Run down to the south boat ramp in 8 to 15 feet of water. Bullhead fishing is fair at the North Grade using night crawlers. A few crappies and yellow perch are being caught using minnows and mini-jigs in Angler's Bay.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Bluegills are being caught in the canals and around some docks. Cover lots of ground to find docks that hold fish. Anglers are catching largemouth bass in the canals and around flooded brush using soft plastic lures. A few smallmouth bass are moving up to the points.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing continues to be good below the spillway. Casting jigs with minnows or shiners in the current breaks produced many good fish. Walleye fishing was fair on the rest of the lake with anglers working jig and minnow combos. White bass fishing was also good below the spillway using jig and minnow combos. Good opportunities exist for channel catfish at the narrows with traditional catfish bait.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good on the south end of the lake. Casting jigs tipped with minnows and twisters have produced 14 to 18-inch fish. The evening bite has been best.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair in the evening with minnows. Anglers are catching mostly small fish.

Pleasant Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching some 10-inch yellow perch.

Lost Island Lake (Palo Alto): Walleye fishing is fair in the evening casting jigs tipped with minnows. Bullhead fishing is fair using night crawlers on the bottom near the bridge.

Silver Lake (Palo Alto): Bullhead fishing is fair.

Ingham Lake (Emmet): Anglers are catching 9 to 11-inch crappies along the riprap.

Willow Creek (Osceola): There is a good population of 3 to 5-pound channel catfish in this lake. Fish around the submerged brush and along the dam. Small bluegills are being caught around the shore using a teardrop and worm under a bobber.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): Anglers are catching small crappies from the pier with small jigs.

Brushy Creek (Webster): The cooler weather, heavy rains and high water muddied some of the bays at Brushy Creek. Walleyes have been caught off the points and along the dam in early morning and in the evening hours using a slip bobber and a leech. A few crappies were caught this week from shore on a small hook with a minnow. Bluegills remain in deep water by structure. Bass anglers have been catching limits of largemouth bass using an assortment of lures.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): The cold, windy weather shut down the yellow bass bite but it should start up again this week with warm weather predicted. Crappies have been biting in the Marina. Anglers are catching a few walleyes on leeches. Channel catfish have been biting cut bait drifted in the main lake.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Anglers are catching channel catfish on a variety of baits. White bass are hitting twisters.

North Twin Lake (Calhoun): Bullheads weighing more than one pound have been biting on night crawlers. Anglers are picking up a few crappies, yellow bass, bluegill and walleye, but the inconsistent weather is holding back the bite.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing has been spotty. Anglers are catching some fish trolling crankbaits. Live bait fishing has been producing a lot of sub-legal walleye. Remember, Clear Lake has a 14-inch minimum length for walleyes. The yellow bass bite has slowed due to the colder temperatures, but anglers are still catching a few yellow bass in deeper water. Expect them to move back shallow as soon as the weather warms. Use small jigs, minnows and cut bait for the best yellow action. Fishing for bullheads is fair at the Ventura Grade and Ventura Access. Night crawlers fished on the bottom for the best action.

Rice Lake (Winnebago): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the bottom.

Crystal Lake (Hancock): Bullhead fishing is good. Fish the shorelines in the evening for the best action. Channel catfish are hitting on night crawlers, dead chubs and chicken liver.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Channel catfish are hitting on chicken liver and night crawlers. Fish the north shoreline in the evening for the best action.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Crappies are being caught drift fishing in 10 to 14 feet of water. Use small jigs and minnows suspended 4 to 8 feet off the bottom.

Briggs Woods (Hamilton): Crappies have been biting on small jigs and minnows. Fish the dam, the jetties or, if in a boat, the outside of the vegetation.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

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